REMARKS

Amendments to the Specification

The specification has been amended to include ATCC Accession Numbers for plasmid pAL1.5, containing a full-length *TCL-1* cDNA as an EcoRI insert into the pBluescript SK^+ vector (Stratagene), and plasmid p20-7SE, containing a genomic sequence of *TCL-1* as a SalI-EcoRI insert into the pBluescript SK^+ vector.

Claim Amendments

Claims 5 and 17 have been amended to recite that "said isolated TCL-1 protein binds an antibody that also binds to the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO:2." Support for this amendment can be found, for example, at page 9, line 35 to page 10, line 25 of the specification.

Claim 7 has been amended to recite "An isolated fragment of a TCL-1 protein comprising at least 10 contiguous amino acid residues from SEQ ID NO:2." Support for this amendment can be found, for example, at page 10, lines 6-9 of the specification. Claim 7 has further been amended to delete the word "specifically" from "specifically bound." Support for this amendment can be found, for example, at page 9, line 35 to page 10, line 6 of the specification.

Claim 13 has been amended to recite that "said fusion protein binds to an antibody that also binds to the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO:2." Support for this amendment can be found, for example, at page 9, line 35 to page 10, line 25 of the specification. Claim 13 has further been amended to recite a "TCL-1 amino acid sequence of at least 10 contiguous amino acid residues from SEQ ID NO:2." Support for the amendment can be found, for example, at page 10, lines 6-9 of the specification.

Claim 17, has been amended in step (b) to recite "recovering the expressed TCL-1 protein." Support for this amendment can be found, for example, at page 25, lines 13-18.

Claims 18 and 19 have been amended to recite "90% amino acid sequence identity." Support for this amendment can be found, for example, at page 10, lines 10-20 of the specification. Claims 18 and 19 have further been amended to recite "An isolated TCL-1 protein derivative." Support for this amendment can be found, for example, at page 9, line 35 to page 10, line 2 of the specification.

The amended claims are supported by the subject application as filed. Therefore, this Amendment adds no new matter. Additional remarks are set forth below with reference to the headings in the Office Action.

Objection to Claim 7 Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(c)

Claim 7 has been objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. In particular, the Examiner asserts that claim 7 is directed to a "fragment of the protein of claim 6", which reads on proteins that are much smaller than the minimum size recited in claim 6 and accordingly does not further limit claim 6 (Office Action, page 3, lines 11-12). Claim 7 has been rewritten in independent form to overcome the objection. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to Claim 7 under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(c).

Rejection of Claim 7 Under 35 U.S.C. § 101

Claim 7 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. The Examiner states that "[a]s written, claim 7 is directed to a fragment of the protein of claim 6" and concludes that "[s]ince it is likely that fragments of the TCL-1 protein of claim 6 are generated at various points during the life-cycle of T cells (e.g. during proteosome degradation, etc.), the claim reads on products of nature" (Office Action page 3, line 20 to page 4, line 2). While disagreeing with the Examiner, Applicants have amended Claim 7, as helpfully suggested by the Examiner, to recite "isolated fragment", in order to expedite allowance of the claims. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 101.

Rejection of Claims 5, 13 and 17 Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

Claims 5, 13 and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that Applicants regard as the invention. Certain claims have been amended, however, the amendments are not intended to narrow the scope of the claims. As amended, the claims even more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that Applicants regard as the invention.

In the Office Action, the Examiner states that "[t]he specification does not clearly define the term TCL-1 protein in any limiting way", but that "the specification does teach that a TCL-1 fragment may be a fragment or amino acid variant of the TCL-1 sequence shown in Figure 3a (i.e. SEQ ID NO: 2), so long as the fragment or amino acid variant is capable of displaying one or more biological activities associated with a full-length TCL-1 protein" (Office Action, page 4, lines 12-16). The Examiner further states that "[a]ccording to the specification, such biological activities include but are not limited to antigenicity (i.e. the ability to bind to an anti-TCL-1 antibody) and immunogenicity (i.e. the ability to generate an antibody that is capable of binding a TCL-1 protein)", however "it is unclear what is the minimal functional requirement for a protein to be considered a 'TCL-1' protein" (Office Action, page 4, line 16 to page 5, line 6).

Claims 5, 13 and 17 have been amended to recite that said TCL-1 protein or fusion protein "binds to an antibody that also binds to the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO:2." Thus, Applicants have defined the claimed proteins in terms of a functional activity that is supported in the originally-filed specification (i.e., antigenicity). Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 5, 13 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, are respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claim 7 Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

Claim 7 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that Applicants regard as the invention. In the Office Action, the Examiner states that the subjective term "specifically bound" is "not explicitly defined in the instant specification, leaving it open to interpretation by the skilled artisan" (Office Action, page 5, lines 9-10). Although disagreeing with the

Examiner, Applicants have amended Claim 7 to delete the term "specifically" from "specifically bound". As amended, Claim 7 is directed to an isolated fragment of a TCL-1 protein, which can be bound by an antibody which also binds to the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO:2, thereby eliminating any uncertainty as to what "degree of binding" is intended. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Rejection of Claim 17 Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

Claim 17 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being vague and indefinite in that there is no prior antecedent basis for the term "said nucleotide sequence". The Examiner states "[f]or example, the recombinant expression vector of part (a) can reasonably be expected to comprise multiple, different sequences" (Office Action, page 5, lines 15-17). Applicants have amended Claim 17, as helpfully suggested by the Examiner, to recite "said nucleotide sequence that encodes the TCL-1 protein." Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, are respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims 7, 18 and 19 Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, First Paragraph

Claims 7, 18 and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that the rejection is necessitated by applicants' amendments of the claims in the response filed on 12/30/2004 (Office Action, page 6, lines 5-6). According to the Examiner, "Applicants' response points to page 58, lines 16-24, for support for the newly added limitation 'whereby said isolated protein binds an antibody that also binds to the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO: 2.' This citation does not, however, provide literal or implicit support for that which is now claimed" (Office Action, page 6, lines 13-16).

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's conclusion that the newly added recitation comprises "impermissible New Matter". In the above-referenced response, dated 12/30/2004, Applicants amended Claim 7 to indicate that the claimed protein fragment can be "bound by an antibody which also binds to the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO: 2". Claim 7 has

been amended further, herein, to recite an "isolated fragment of a TCL-1 protein comprising at least 10 contiguous amino acid residues from SEQ ID NO:2". Support for both claim amendments can be found in the specification on page 9, line 35 through page 10, line 6, which states:

> As defined herein, a TCL-1 derivative may be a fragment or amino acid variant of the TCL-1 sequence shown in Figure 3A as long as the fragment or amino acid variant is capable of displaying one or more biological activities associated with a full-length TCL-1 protein. Such biological activities include, but are not limited to antigenicity, *i.e.*, the ability to bind to an anti-TCL-1 antibody, and immunogenicity, *i.e.*, the ability to generate an antibody which is capable of binding a TCL-1 protein (emphasis added).

The above quotation specifies that the TCL-1 sequence is shown in Figure 3A. The sequence shown in Figure 3A has been identified in the specification as corresponding to SEQ ID NO:2 (see, e.g., Specification, page 7, lines 2-3). Thus, Applicants have provided support for Claim 7, as amended, in the instant specification. Therefore, the proposed amendments do not add new matter.

Claims 18 and 19 were also amended in the above-referenced response, dated 12/30/2004, to recite that the claimed isolated protein "binds an antibody which also binds the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO: 2". Claims 18 and 19 have been amended further, herein, to recite that the isolated protein is "[a]n isolated TCL-1 protein derivative". Support for this claim amendment can be found in the specification at page 9, line 35 through page 10, line 25, as indicated for Claim 7 above, which states:

> As defined herein, a TCL-1 derivative may be a fragment or amino acid variant of the TCL-1 sequence shown in Figure 3A as long as the fragment or amino acid variant is capable of displaying one or more biological activities associated with a full-length TCL-1 protein. Such biological activities include, but are not limited to antigenicity, *i.e.*, the ability to bind to an anti-TCL-1 antibody, and immunogenicity, *i.e.*, the ability to generate an antibody which is capable of binding a TCL-1 protein (emphasis added).

As noted above, the quotation specifies that the TCL-1 sequence is shown in Figure 3A. This sequence has been identified in the specification as corresponding to SEQ ID NO:2 (see, e.g., Specification, page 7, lines 2-3). Thus, Applicants have provided support for Claims 18 and 19,

as amended, in the instant specification. Therefore, the proposed amendments do not add new matter.

In the Office Action, the Examiner further states that, if the claim amendments for Claims 18 and 19 were to be accepted as not comprising new matter, these claims would raise "additional issues under 35 U.S.C. 112 1st paragraph with regard to written description" (Office Action, page 7, lines 13-15). In particular, the Examiner states that "Claims 18-19 now claim a genus of proteins comprising a relatively limited percent indentify [sic] (i.e. 70%) over a relatively short stretch of the TCL-1 protein described by SEQ ID NO: 2 which must meet the very specific functional limitation of being able to bind an antibody that also binds to the protein of SEQ ID NO: 2" (Office Action, page 7, lines 15-18). The Examiner concludes that "[b]ecause of this lack of a structural/functional correlation between the protein variants which are encompassed by the claim and the recited functional limitation, the skilled artisan would not have been able to envision a sufficient number of specific embodiments of the recited proteins to describe the broadly claimed genus of proteins that actually do retain the ability to cross-react with an antibody that binds the protein of SEQ ID NO: 2. Therefore, the skilled artisan would reasonably have concluded applicants were not in possession of the broadly claimed genus of proteins" (Office Action, page 8, lines 7-14).

While disagreeing with the Examiner, Applicants have amended Claims 18 and 19 to recite that the isolated protein comprises "an amino acid sequence having at least 90% amino acid sequence identity to the amino acid sequence depicted as SEQ ID NO:2", in order to expedite prosecution and allowance of the claimed subject matter. As amended, Claims 18 and 19 encompass a narrower genus of protein derivatives, which are at least 25, or at least 50, amino acids in length, respectively, and which are also characterized by having significant percent identity to corresponding regions of the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO:2. One of skill in the art would reasonably conclude that such protein derivatives would comprise antigenic sequences that would be capable of being bound by "an antibody that also binds the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO: 2". Therefore, the skilled artisan would have concluded that Applicants were in possession of the proteins of Claims 18 and 19, as amended, at the time the instant application was filed. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 7, 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph.

Rejection of Claims 5 and 13 Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, First Paragraph

Claims 5 and 13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, because the specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the invention commensurate in scope with the claims. In particular, the Examiner states that the specification does not reasonably provide enablement for isolated proteins that are not bound by an antibody that binds to the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO: 2 (Office Action, page 9, lines 1-4).

In the Office Action, the Examiner states that the specification, "while being enabling for isolated protein [sic] that bind to an antibody that binds to the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO: 2, does not reasonably provide enablement for isolated proteins that are not bound by an antibody that binds to the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO: 2" (Office Action, page 9, lines 1-4). While disagreeing with the Examiner, Applicants have amended Claims 5 and 13 to recite that the TCL-1 protein or fusion protein "binds to an antibody that also binds to the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO:2", thereby obviating the rejection. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 5 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph.

Rejection of Claims 5, 13 and 17 Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, First Paragraph

Claims 5, 13 and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. In particular, the Examiner states that "[t]he term TCL-1 protein is not explicitly defined in the instant specification and can be interpreted as encompassing less than full length proteins obtained from any 'TCL-1' protein" (Office Action, page 14, lines 17-19). According to the Examiner, "the claimed proteins need only comprise a relatively small number of amino acid residues with less than complete identity to SEQ ID NO: 2. Thus claims 5, 13 & 17 encompass a very large genus of different proteins" (Office Action, page 16, lines 6-8). The Examiner concludes that "there is no basis in the prior art or originally filed specification for one of skill in the art to envision a sufficient number of representative embodiments of the recited 'TCL-1' proteins to describe the broadly claimed genus of such

proteins that meet the structural requirements of the rejected claims" (Office Action, page 16, lines 11-14).

Claims 5, 13 and 17 have been amended, herein, to more explicitly define the term TCL-1 protein, by reciting that the TCL-1 protein or fusion protein "binds to an antibody that also binds to the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO:2." Thus, Applicants have further defined the claimed proteins in terms of function (i.e., the ability to bind to an antibody which binds to the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO: 2). One of skill in the art would not reasonably expect that a protein with limited identity to SEQ ID NO: 2 would be capable of being bound by an antibody that recognizes and binds to the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO:2. Therefore, Applicants have defined the term TCL-1 protein in a manner that is sufficiently limiting, so as to exclude proteins with limited identity to SEQ ID NO:2, such as the MTCP-1 protein cited by the Examiner (Office Action, page 15, line 12 to page 16, line 2).

In addition, Claim 13 has been amended, herein, to recite that the claimed fusion protein comprises "a TCL-1 amino acid sequence of at least 10 contiguous amino acid residues from SEQ ID NO:2." Thus, Applicants have further defined the claimed protein in terms of structure. In the Office Action, the Examiner states that "[t]he TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO: 2 appears to have been novel in the art at the time of filing and no other TCL-1 protein appears to have been described in the prior art at that time" (Office Action, page 16, lines 9-10), and that "applicants have clearly demonstrated that they are in possession of the protein of SEQ ID NO: 2 as well as its fragments" (Office Action, page 8, lines 19-20). Therefore, the skilled artisan would recognize, based on the instant specification, that Applicants were in possession of the fusion protein of Claim 13, as amended.

Rejection of Claims 5, 7 and 13 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 5, 7 and 13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stern *et al.* (*Oncogene 8*(9):2475-2483, 1993). In the Office Action, the Examiner asserts that Stern *et al.* "teach the characterization of a gene encoding a novel protein, mature T cell proliferation-1 protein (MTCP-1) and provide a predicted amino acid sequence", and that "[t]he MTCP-1 protein described by Stern et al comprises a sequence of 10 amino acids with 80%

identity to amino acid residues 71-80 of SEQ ID NO: 2" (Office Action, page 18, lines 8-14). The Examiner states that, although

> Stern et al do not actually isolate or produce the MTCP-1 protein. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to construct an expression vector encoding the predicted amino acid sequence for MTCP-1 and to recombinantly produce the predicted polypeptide. One would have been motivated to do so in order to receive the expected benefit of being able to further characterize the biochemical and functional activities of a novel protein that appears to be expressed in several important human disorders.

(Office Action page 19, lines 15-21)

The Examiner states that "the burden is on the applicant to show a novel or unobvious difference between the claimed products and the products of the prior art (e.g. that the products of the prior art do not possess the same material structural and functional characteristics of the claimed product)" (Office Action, page 20, lines 1-5).

To establish *prima facie* obviousness of a claimed invention, all of the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. In re Royka, 490 F.2d 981, 180 U.S.P.Q. 580 (C.C.P.A. 1974). Furthermore, a *prima facie* case of obviousness is established only if the teachings of the cited art would have suggested the claimed invention to one of ordinary skill in the art with a reasonable expectation of successfully achieving the claimed results. In re Vaeck, 20 U.S.P.Q.2d 1438, 1442 (Fed. Cir. 1991). Both the suggestion and the reasonable expectation of success must be founded in the prior art, not Applicants' disclosure. Id.

Applicants respectfully direct the Examiner's attention to the fact that each of Claims 5, 7 and 13, have been amended, herein, to recite that the claimed proteins "bind to an antibody that also binds to the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO:2." In order for the cited prior art to render the claimed products obvious, the prior art must teach or suggest all of the limitations of the claimed product. Applicants assert that Stern *et al.* do not teach a protein having the claimed functional and structural properties.

As stated by the Examiner in the Office Action, "the overall identity of the MTCP-1 protein to the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO:2 is only ~36%" (Office Action, page 11, lines 8-10). The Examiner also indicates that the MTCP-1 protein "comprises a sequence of 10 amino acid residues with 80% identity to amino acid residues 71-80 of SEQ ID NO: 2 (see attached

sequence search results in Exhibit A)" (Office Action, page 10, lines 22 to page 11, line 3). Comparison of the ten-amino-acid region of MTCP-1 to the corresponding region in SEQ ID NO:2 reveals that, although 8 of the 10 amino acid residues are identical between the two proteins, those 8 residues are not contiguous with one another (see, e.g., Result 2 in Exhibit B). In the Office Action, the Examiner states that "[t]he prior art teaches that the optimum-sized peptide for generating antisera is from 10-20 amino acid residues in length, although peptides as small as 8 residues in length may be used to generate antisera (see page 71, section 1.1.3 in Hancock, et al. 'Synthesis of Peptides for Use as Immunogens', Methods in Molecular Biology, Vol. 80: Immunochemical Protocols, 2nd edition. J.D. Pound, editor, pages 69-79, Humana Press)" (Office Action, page 10, lines 8-12). Furthermore, the Hancock *et al.* reference cited by the Examiner also states that "[s]hort peptides (below about seven residues) are probably of insufficient size to function as epitopes" (Hancock *et al.*, page 71, section entitled "*1.1.3. Immunological Requirements*").

The MTCP-1 protein sequence disclosed by Stern *et al.* does not contain at least 8 contiguous amino acids that have 100% identity to an 8-amino-acid region of SEQ ID NO:2. Based on the teachings of Hancock *et al.*, the MTCP1 sequence disclosed by Stern *et al.* does not contain an amino acid sequence that could reasonably serve as a common epitope between the two proteins. In fact, the longest stretch of contiguous amino acid residues in MTCP-1 that shares 100% identity to an amino acid region of SEQ ID NO:2 is only **6** amino acids in length. According to the teachings of Hancock *et al.*, this 6-amino-acid sequence would likely be insufficient to function as an epitope. Therefore, based on the low degree of identity between the two full-length proteins, and the lack of a common epitope of at least 8 amino acids, one of skill in the art would not reasonably expect that an antibody that recognizes an epitope on the TCL-1 protein of SEQ ID NO:2, would be capable of successfully binding to the MTCP-1 protein. Accordingly, Stern *et al.* fail to teach a protein having the claimed structural and functional properties.

Moreover, Claims 5 and 13 are directed to proteins that are "encoded by a first nucleic acid that hybridizes under stringent conditions to a second amino acid sequence that consists of the complement of SEQ ID NO: 1 from nucleotide 49 to 387". This property is not taught or suggested by the MTCP-1 protein disclosed in Stern *et al.* As indicated in the Office Action, the

MTCP-1 protein "comprises a sequence of 10 amino acid residues with 80% identity to amino acids 71-80 of SEQ ID NO: 2". Stern *et al.* discloses that the referenced 10-amino-acid sequence of MTCP-1 is encoded by the following nucleotide sequence: CT**A** CCT **C**TC ATG TGG CA**A** CTC TAC CC**G** GA**G** (see Stern *et al.*, page 2479, Fig. 5C; the nucleotides that are underlined and in bold indicate five positions where the nucleotide differs from the corresponding nucleotide of SEQ ID NO:1). Thus, Stern *et al.* explicitly teach that the MTCP-1 DNA sequence, which encodes the 10 amino acid sequence with 80% identity to amino acids 71-80 of SEQ ID NO:2, is only about 83% identical (25 out of 30 nucleotides) to a region of SEQ ID NO:1.

In the Office Action, the Examiner argues that "[u]sing the corresponding nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 . . . and considering the genetic code, one of skill in the art can generate a synthetic oligomer of 30 polynucleotides in length that encodes the corresponding amino acid sequence from MTCP-1 taught by Stern et al. and which comprises two nucleotide substitutions relative to the sequence from SEQ ID NO: 1" (Office Action, page 18, lines 15-19). Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's argument that the Stern *et al.* reference directs one of skill in the art to "generate a synthetic oligomer of 30 polynucleotides in length that encodes the corresponding amino acid sequence from MTCP-1." As noted above, in order to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference . . . . and there must be a reasonable expectation of success. M.P.E.P. § 2142, p. 2100-128, and § 2143, p. 2100-129 (8th Ed., Latest Rev., May, 2004).

The Stern *et al.* reference cited by the Examiner does not provide any suggestion or motivation for one of skill in the art to generate a 30 nucleotide oligomer that (1) encodes the specified 10 amino acid residues of MTCP-1, and (2) has a nucleotide sequence wherein 28 of 30 nucleotides are identical to the corresponding nucleotides in SEQ ID NO:1. To generate such an oligomer, one of skill in the art would be required to modify the MTCP-1 coding sequence taught by Stern *et al.*, which differs from the corresponding region of SEQ ID NO:1 at five nucleotide positions, by introducing three additional specific nucleotide substitutions. Stern *et al.* provide no suggestion or motivation for one of skill in the art to make the three specific

nucleotide substitutions in the disclosed MTCP-1 sequence in order to generate an oligomer that shares 28 of 30 nucleotides in common with the region of SEQ ID NO. 1, and which might fulfill the claimed property of hybridizing to the complement of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 from nucleotide 49 to 387, under the claimed stringent hybridization conditions. Thus, in addition to failing to teach a protein having the claimed structural and functional properties, Stern *et al.* fails to provide the requisite suggestion to modify its teachings to arrive at such a protein. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 5, 7 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement

A Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) is being filed concurrently herewith. Entry of the Supplemental IDS is respectfully requested.

Statement Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.806 and 1.808

A Statement Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.806 and 1.808 is being filed concurrently herewith. Entry of the Statement Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.806 and 1.808 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,
HAMILTON, BROOK, SMITH & REYNOLDS, P.C.

By _____
Eric M. Balicky, Ph.D.
Registration No. 57,020
Telephone: (978) 341-0036
Facsimile: (978) 341-0136
Concord, MA 01742-9133

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